

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 01431 261957Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CPR-01 A-01
OPR-02 /034 W

-----034519 262017Z /50

P 261945Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7817

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 01431

PLEASE PASS WHITE HOUSE

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT BY PRESIDENT CARTER

1. DURING THE COURSE OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S VISIT TO MEXICO LAST WEEK, SECRETARY TODMAN MENTIONED THAT THERE WAS SOME CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO ADDING A MEXICAN STOP TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S MULTI-NATION TRIP THIS SPRING. APPARENTLY THIS IS BEING DISCUSSED IN PART BECAUSE OF A REPORT THAT THE MEXICANS WERE UNHAPPY THEY HAD NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE ITINERARY WHEN THE TRIP WAS FIRST ANNOUNCED.

2. SOME TIME AGO I HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH FORMIN ROEL ABOUT THIS QUESTION. HE CONVEYED TO ME A CLEAR PRE-REFERENCE THAT MEXICO HOST A VISIT BY THE PRESIDENT APART FROM THE MULTI-NATION TRIP. HE DID SO I BELIEVE BECAUSE HE APPRECIATES THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD LIKELY HAVE MORE TIME IN MEXICO IF A SEPARATE TRIP WERE PLANNED AND ALSO BECAUSE HE UNDERSTANDS THAT AN INDEPENDENT VISIT WOULD LIKELY RECEIVE MORE ATTENTION AND TAKE ON A GREATER IMPORTANCE.

3. THE VICE PRESIDENT HAS JUST CONCLUDED A HIGHLY
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SUCCESSFUL VISIT HERE. SECRETARY BERGLAND IS IN MEXICO CITY THIS WEEK. ATTORNEY GENERAL BELL AND SECRETARY MARSHALL WILL ARRIVE THE FIRST WEEKEND IN FEBRUARY. AND WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO A VISIT BY SECRETARY VANCE SOMETIME PRIOR TO THE END OF MAY.

4. I THINK IT MAKES MORE SENSE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S

VISIT TO OCCUR SOMETIME IN LATE 1978 OR THEREAFTER, RATHER THAN TO CROWD INTO A PERIOD OF JUST A FEW MONTHS VISITS BY THE VICE PRESIDENT, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE CABINET AND THE PRESIDENT. GIVEN THE AMOUNT OF GOOD WILL THAT THE ALREADY COMPLETED AND PRESENTLY PLANNED HIGH LEVEL VISITS WILL OCCASION, I ALSO PREFER TO RESERVE THE IMPACT OF A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT FOR A TIME WHEN THE IMPACT OF THESE OTHER TRIPS HAS DISSIPATED.

5. I WOULD ALSO PREFER TO SCHEDULE THE VISIT FOR A TIME WHEN WE CLEARLY HAVE BEHIND US THE NEGOTIATIONS ON NATURAL GAS PRICES. AN EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE EASTER VISIT MIGHT WELL AFFECT NEGOTIATION PROGRESS AND CLOUD THE VISIT.

6. I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO BRING THESE CONSIDERATIONS TO YOUR ATTENTION SO THAT THEY MIGHT BE A FACTOR IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS. LUCEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MEXICO01431
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780039-0553
Format: TEL
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780120/aaaaaqiv.tel
Line Count: 79
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 944109e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3710535
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE VISIT BY PRESIDENT CARTER
TAGS: OVIP, US, MX, (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/944109e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014